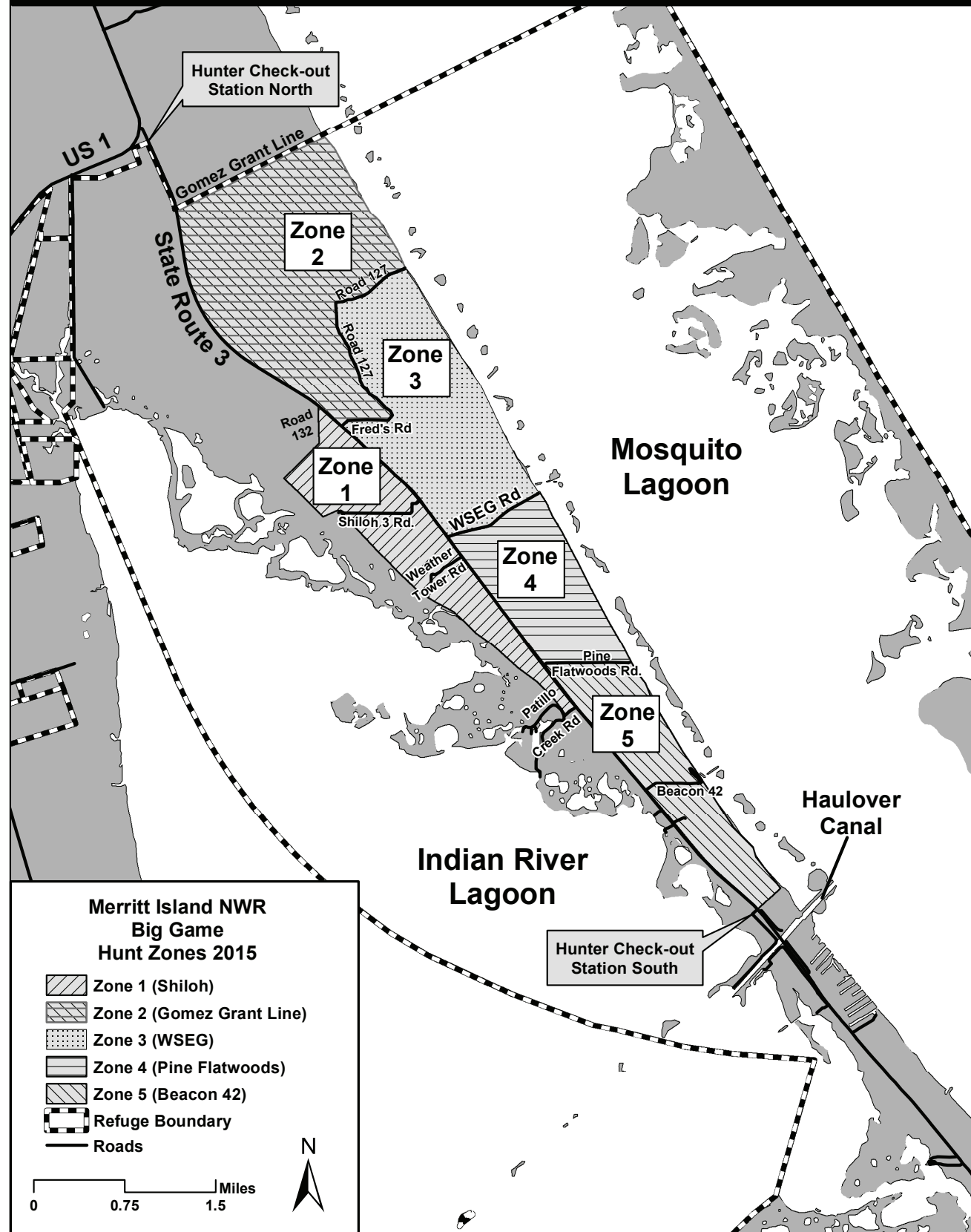


Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Big Game Hunt Zones 2015



Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 2683
Titusville, Florida 32781
321-861-0669
http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Merritt_Island
<http://southeast.fws.gov>



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

2015 Big Game Hunting Regulations

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge



Welcome to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

Merritt Island NWR will conduct one, archery only, three day weekend, white-tailed deer hunt for 2015. The hunt area includes 5,000 acres of upland habitat along State Road 3, north of Haulover Canal between the Indian River Lagoon and Mosquito Lagoon. The area lies within Volusia and Brevard Counties, FL. The lands east of State Road 3, are in the joint management area between the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. There are five zones named: (1) Shiloh (2) Gomez Grant Line (3) WSEG (4) Pine Flatwoods and (5) Beacon 42. See map for defined zones and a color map at www.fws.gov/refuge/Merritt_Island/. Pine Flatwoods hiking trail and WSEG boat ramp will be closed to all public use during hunt except for permitted hunters.

White-Tailed Deer Hunting

License and Permits: To maintain a quality white-tailed deer hunt, the Refuge requires every hunter to obtain a Merritt Island NWR Archery permit from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Limited entry permit applications are available on the FWC website and are randomly selected. Successful applicants are notified by FWC. Applicants must purchase limited entry permits by a specific deadline or forfeit the permit. All adult hunters must possess a government issued picture ID; all applicable state licenses, including a deer permit, archery permit, and hunting safety courses as required. Each hunter must possess the appropriate Merritt Island

NWR Archery permit from FWC for the specified days and a signed self-issuing Merritt Island NWR Big Game Hunt Regulations permit from the brochure to ensure each hunter has read and understands the Refuge rules and regulations.

Hunter Requirements: The hunt is limited to a maximum of 30 hunters per day and the quota hunt permit allows the hunter to hunt all three days of the permitted weekend. Hunters are allowed to enter the hunt zone up to two days before the hunt for scouting, but must remain in their permitted zone. Hunters may access the Refuge no earlier than 5am and must be off the refuge no later than 2 hours after sunset. All hunters 16 years of age or older must purchase a Merritt Island NWR Archery Permit. One youth (under 16) is allowed to hunt, without obtaining a quota permit, while supervised by a permitted adult hunter (over 18). State regulations for hunter safety requirements must be met. Parking is available along established Refuge roads and parking lots. Signs will be posted in the hunt areas and maps would be provided within the hunt brochure. Brochures are available at the Refuge visitor information center, entrance kiosks, and on the Refuge website.

Equipment: This hunt is archery only and all archery equipment must meet all State regulations. It is prohibited to use bows equipped with sights or aiming devices with electronic computational capabilities or light (laser) projection during Archery Season. Crossbows are not allowed unless you obtain a Persons with Disabilities Crossbow Permit from FWC.

Harvest: The Refuge bag limit is two white-tailed deer per limited entry permit in any combination as legal per state regulations. Permitted

collector office. Florida residents applying through the Internet must have a valid Florida issued Driver License or ID card to be considered a resident. Children, active duty military, resident disabled customers, and residents age 65 or older that do not have an active Florida Driver license or ID Card must apply at a license agent or tax collector office to show an alternate proof of Florida residency.

WHEN TO APPLY FOR ARCHERY HUNTS

- Phase I Application Period: August 17 at 10:00 a.m. – August 27 at 11:59 p.m.
- Phase I Claims Posted: by August 31, and open through September 10 at 11:59 p.m.
- Phase II Leftovers: September 14 at 10:00 a.m. until sold out (or the last date of the hunts – October 18)

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

- Remaining permits will be issued on a 1st come, 1st served until all available slots are filled
- Each permit costs \$16.50
- To check for permits availability, go to **License.MyFWC.com** and choose **“Permit Availability”**
- If you are successful in the Phase I drawing, you may claim/ pay for your permit at a license agent or tax collector office and will receive your permit from the clerk
- If you are successful in the Phase I drawing, you may claim/ pay for your permit online and can print the permit right away on your own printer
- You are limited to 1 permit for the season
- Permit is good yourself and one youth under the age of 16
- If you have problems with the issuance of your quota permit, please contact FWC at (850) 488-3641 (M-F 8am-5pm).

hunters may also harvest feral hogs only as per the Big Game hunt, using legal archery equipment only. There is no size or bag limit for feral hogs. All game is subject to inspection by Refuge staff, Federal, State, or County Law Enforcement Officers. Our State FWC hunt area is C-4 and the new antler point regulations are as follows: (1) Antlered deer are defined as having 3 points on one side or a 10 inch main beam; (2) Antlerless deer are defined as any deer with antlers less than 5 inches above the hairline. There is one check station is at the northwest corner of Haulover Canal and the second check station is the kiosk at the north end of SR3. **Check out at one of two check stations is MANDITORY for both successful and unsuccessful hunters and must be completed on each day hunted.** The information provided will assist in maintaining future quality deer and hog hunts.

For further information contact:

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge P.O. Box 2683
Titusville, Florida 32781
Phone: (321) 861-0669 http://www.fws.gov/Merritt_Island/

Refuge-Specific Big Game Hunting Regulations

Listed below are refuge-specific regulations that pertain to Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) Big Game Hunting season 2015. These regulations may be modified as habitat, population, or other conditions change. Repeat violations of refuge regulations may result in the loss of hunting privileges.

- We require a Merritt Island NWR Big Game Hunt regulations permits. The permit is (found inside the annual big game hunt brochure/ permit, signature required) is free, nontransferable, and anyone on refuge land in possession of hunting equipment must sign, possess, and carry the permit at all times.
- In addition to a valid signed Merritt Island NWR Big Game Hunt Regulations Permit (signed brochure), and a paid Merritt Island NWR Archery Permit, hunters must have on their person, an Archery Permit, Hunting License, and Deer Permit.
- In addition to Federal regulations, State game and fish laws and regulations are adopted and in effect unless they have been further restricted by Federal law or other regulations. Licenses, permits, all hunting equipment and effects, and vehicles or other conveyances are subject to inspection by Federal, State, and County Law Enforcement Officers.
- We allow hunting on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday on permitted weekends within the State’s deer season. Legal shooting hours are ½ hour before sunrise to ½ hour after sunset. Hunters may access the Refuge no earlier than 5 a.m. and must leave the Refuge no later than 2 hours after legal sunset.
- We allow deer hunting only in the designated zones of the refuge as delineated in the refuge big game hunting regulations brochure map, which the hunter must possess and carry. We prohibit hunters to enter the normal or expanded restricted areas of the Kennedy Space Center (KSC).
- During the refuge archery season, hunters may only use archery equipment and crossbows in accordance with State archery regulations. Crossbows are not allowed without a state disabilities crossbow permit. Weapons must meet all State regulations.
- You must park vehicles in a manner that does not block roads or gates.
- We prohibit the use of ATVs except by disabled hunters with a refuge Special Use Permit (General Special Use Application and Permit FWS Form 3-1383-G).

- We prohibit off-road vehicle travel or vehicle travel around a closed gate or on fire lines. We prohibit leaving vehicles, boats, or trailers on the refuge overnight.
- Persons possessing, transporting, or carrying firearms on national wildlife refuges must comply with all provisions of State and local law. Persons may only use (discharge) firearms in accordance with refuge regulations.
- We prohibit hunting from or within 100 yards of all refuge roads open to public vehicle travel or within 200 yards of a building or KSC facility. We prohibit shooting over any dike or roadway.
- In addition to State hunter education requirements, an adult (parent or guardian) age 18 or older must supervise and must remain within sight of and in normal voice contact of the youth hunter under age 16. Parents or adult guardians are responsible for ensuring that hunters under age 16 do not engage in conduct that would constitute a violation of the refuge regulations.
- We prohibit commercial hunting/guiding without a Special Use Permit. No person shall utilize the service of a guide service, outfitter, club, organization, or other person who provides equipment, services, or assistance on the refuge for compensation (monetary or non-monetary compensation) unless the guide, guide service, outfitter, club, organization or person has obtained a Special Use Permit from the refuge. It is your responsibility to verify that the guide, guide service, etc. has obtained the required Special Use Permit.
- We prohibit target practice or any non-hunting discharge of firearms.
- We prohibit marking any tree, or other refuge feature, with flagging, litter, paint, or blaze.
- We prohibit cutting of holes or manipulation of vegetation (i.e., cutting branches/ bushes, mowing, weed-eating, herbicide use, etc.) and hunting from manipulated areas.
- All hunters 16 years of age or older must purchase a Merritt Island NWR Archery Permit. Hunters under the age of 16 do not need a permit but must be accompanied by a permitted adult (18 years of age or older). Each adult may supervise one youth hunter and must remain within sight and normal voice contact and the pair must share a single bag limit.
- We allow only portable deer stands capable of being carried in their entirety by a single individual. Tree stands may be placed up to two days prior to each hunt and must be removed by 11:00 am the day after the hunt. Hunters must permanently affix the hunter’s name and address to their deer stands on the refuge. No more than one stand or blind per permit may be on the refuge at any time, unless a permitted hunter is accompanied by a youth hunter. Stands for youth hunters must be placed within sight and normal voice contact of permitted hunter’s stand and marked with the hunter’s name, address, and the word “youth”. We prohibit tree steps or screw-in steps.
- All hunters must be on stands or in blinds while hunting. No stalking or movement through the hunt area is permitted while hunting. We prohibit the use of organized drives for taking or attempting to take game.
- Scouting in the hunt area, whether or not you hold a permit for the current hunt is not permitted during quota hunts. Possession of weapons while scouting is prohibited.
- We prohibit hunting from refuge roads and hunting from a vehicle.
- Hunters must be at their vehicles by 1 hour after legal shooting time.



Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge 2015-2016 Deer/Hog Hunt Permit

Name _____	Print
Address _____	(I have read and understand MINWR’s big game hunting regulations.)
Signature _____	(This permit is only valid if signed.)
In case of emergency call 321-867-7911	

- You must gain consent from a Federal Wildlife Officer to track wounded deer beyond one hour after legal sunset. We prohibit tracking three hours after legal sunset. A reasonable effort must be made to retrieve a wounded deer.
- We prohibit cleaning of game within 1,000 feet (300 m) of any developed public recreation area, road, game check station, or gate.
- We prohibit the dumping of game carcasses on the refuge.
- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting is prohibited.
- We prohibit glass containers.
- We prohibit the use of hunting and tracking dogs for all deer and hog hunts.
- We require bow hunters to wear a vest or jacket containing back and front panels of at least 500 square inches of solid-fluorescent-orange color when moving to and from their vehicle, to their deer stand or their hunting spot, and while tracking or dragging out their deer. We do not require bow hunters to wear solid-colored-fluorescent hunter orange when positioned in their stands to hunt.
- We prohibit possession or distribution of bait or hunting with the aid of bait, including any grain, salt, minerals, or other feed or non-naturally occurring attractant on the refuge.
- We allow the unlimited take of feral hog with permitted methods of take during the quota hunt.
- The bag limit for white-tailed deer is two deer per quota hunt. We allow hunters to harvest two antlerless deer per quota hunt. We define antlerless deer per State regulations. It is illegal to take spotted fawns. Otherwise, hunters may harvest any combination of antlered or antlerless deer per hunt. Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission antler restrictions apply. Hunters must ensure that harvested bucks comply with current State antler restrictions.
- Harvested deer must be recorded on the hunter’s state harvest record at the site of kill.
- We require hunters to report all harvested game at the check station before leaving the refuge.
- We prohibit taking, collecting, or disturbing any artifact, property, plant, wildlife, or part thereof, other than that specifically allowed by refuge regulation.
- We prohibit littering.
- We prohibit disturbing, annoying, or interfering with other persons.